

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

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THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

FOUNDED IN 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit association of book-lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors in the West and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to six hundred members. When vacancies exist membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular Membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues of \$12.00. Dues date from the month of the member's election.

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GOLD RUSH LITERATURE: A SYMPOSIUM

Compiled, with Comments, by Oscar Lewis

 **B**ECAUSE CALIFORNIA—and the nation—are this year celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of Marshall's discovery at Coloma, a lively interest in all phases of the Gold Rush has become evident, and there is every likelihood that this will continue to grow as the series of centenary celebrations now in preparation are held. Many thousands who have had heretofore only casual knowledge of events in California during the '49 era—gained for the most part from the stories of Bret Harte and the no less romantic epics of the movie-makers—will have their curiosity sharpened to a point that will send them into the libraries and bookshops eager for further information.

This poses an interesting problem, not alone to librarians and dealers, but to teachers, writers, collectors, bookmen in general. For the literature of the Gold Rush is prodigious—and of extremely uneven quality. From the huge mass of material in print, what books can safely be singled out as authentic, informative, and entertaining? Which are worthy of recommending to readers who wish to inform themselves on this most eventful—and confusing—period in California's history? In other words, what books should form the foundation of a California Gold Rush collection, or provide a useful course of reading on the subject?

In an attempt to find satisfactory answers to these questions, the *News-Letter* queried a group of recognized authorities—historians, collectors, editors, critics—asking each to compile a list of ten books that seemed to him to throw useful light on some phase of the Gold

EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers of the above article, "Gold Rush Literature: A Symposium," will be interested to know that the Club plans to publish late this spring a selected bibliography of the important books bearing on the Gold Rush. Tentative plans are to limit the number of titles to forty-nine, each with a complete bibliographical description and a short comment. Further details will reach members shortly.

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Rush. There were no restrictions imposed, except that only published material be included, and that the Gold Rush period be considered to fall between the years 1848 and 1860. The response was highly gratifying, and the *News-Letter's* editors are grateful for so many prompt, thoughtful, and informed answers. The individual selections will be found at the end of this article; here we shall summarize the selections and attempt to draw some conclusions from them.

The sixteen experts (each submitting a list of ten) named a total of eighty different books. Here are the ten titles most frequently mentioned (the numbers in parentheses indicate on how many lists each appears):

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters* (13).

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado* (11).

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps* (9).

JOSIAH ROYCE: *California from the Conquest in 1846 . . .* (7).

J. D. BORTHWICK: *Three Years in California* (6).

HUBERT H. BANCROFT: *Works* (6).

J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF: *Gold Rush; The Journals, Drawings, and Other Papers* (5).

ALONZO DELANO: *Life on the Plains and Among the Diggings* (4).

SOULÉ, GIHON, and NISBET: *The Annals of San Francisco* (4).

WALTER COLTON: *Three Years in California* (4).

In addition to the above, seven titles were named three times, seven twice, and fifty-six appeared once.

From even a casual reading of the appended lists certain facts present themselves—and offer an interesting field for speculation. For one thing it will be observed that (with two exceptions) no works of fiction were included, none of the numerous collections of mining camp stories by Bret Harte and his imitators, none of the Gold Rush novels that have been appearing with clock-like regularity for many years. Clearly the experts believe that the best pictures of the era are to be found, not in the imaginative tales of the story writers, but in the narratives of those who dealt in sober facts. Pursuing this thought further, another curious fact comes to light. Of the eleven books listed above, and which appear most frequently on the lists, all but four are Gold Rush narratives based on personal, first-hand experience; that is, they are contemporary, eye-witness accounts of the great adventure, and of the four exceptions, three—Royce, Bancroft, and Shinn—although they wrote as historians and therefore impersonally, had themselves

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a wide experience with life in the pioneer towns and camps. It is pertinent too, to note that the books most frequently cited were nearly all written during the period when the Gold Rush was still in progress, although some did not see the light of publication for many years, the most recent (among the first eleven) being the Bruff Journals, which appeared as recently as 1944.

The contributors were invited to comment on their selections if they cared to do so; many of them did, and most interestingly. Unfortunately, we have space only for the briefest summary of their remarks. Several observed that to confine the choices to ten imposed too severe a limitation; one pronounced it "an impossible task." Nearly all qualified their selections; here are some excerpts from their letters: "Not necessarily the best . . . but good to have in any library on the subject." "I think they would belong on almost any list of fifteen or twenty . . ." "There are many others I should also wish to possess." "I would gladly have nominated twice that many." Several wrote detailed and extremely interesting notes explaining the reasons for each of their ten choices; only the *Quarterly's* small size—and the necessity for crowding some other matters into this issue—prevent us from printing them in full.

Readers will of course draw their own conclusions from the appended lists. Neither the *News-Letter's* editors nor the contributors to the symposium intend this as a complete or definitive listing of Gold Rush literature. It does, however, name many of—possibly all—the highlights, and any reader or collector who wishes to inform himself more fully on this great era of Western history can hardly fail to find it both valuable and provocative.

In the following lists it has been necessary—again in the interest of conserving space—to shorten some of the titles and to omit certain bibliographical information, including editions, names of publishers, and the places and dates of first publication.

Anson S. Blake: President, California Historical Society.

DANIEL B. WOODS: *Sixteen Months at the Gold Diggings.*

LEWIS C. GUNN: *Records of a California Family.*

CHARLES EDWARD PANCOAST: *A Quaker Forty Niner.*

ERNEST DEMASSEY: *A Frenchman in the Gold Rush.*

J. W. HARLAN: *California: '46-'88.*

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters.*

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EDWIN BRYANT: *What I Saw in California.*

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado.*

WALTER COLTON: *Three Years in California.*

J. D. BORTHWICK: *Three Years in California.*

John W. Caughey: Editor, *Pacific Historical Review.*

HUBERT H. BANCROFT: *California Inter Pocula.*

AUBREY NEASHAM: *California Gold Discovery: Centennial Papers . . .*

JOSEPH E. WARE: *The Emigrants' Guide to California.*

ALONZO DELANO: *Life on the Plains and Among the Diggings.*

J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF: *Gold Rush: The Journals, Drawings, and Other Papers.*

WILLIAM LEWIS MANLY: *Death Valley in '49.*

RALPH P. BIEBER [Ed.]: *Southern Trails to California in 1849.*

RODMAN W. PAUL: *California Gold: The Beginning of Mining in the Far West.*

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters.*

FRANKLIN WALKER: *San Francisco's Literary Frontier.*

Robert Glass Cleland: Historian.

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters.*

WALTER COLTON: *Three Years in California.*

ALONZO DELANO: *Life on the Plains and Among the Diggings.*

WILLIAM LEWIS MANLY: *Death Valley in '49.*

JOSIAH ROYCE: *California from the Conquest in 1846 . . .*

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps.*

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado.*

SOULÉ, GIHON, and NISBET: *The Annals of San Francisco.*

JOHN R. RIDGE: *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta.*

DANIEL B. WOODS: *Sixteen Months at the Gold Diggings.*

Francis P. Farquhar: Historian and Collector.

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters.*

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps.*

JOSIAH DWIGHT WHITNEY: *Auriferous Gravels.*

STEWART EDWARD WHITE: *The Forty Niners.*

H. M. T. POWELL: *The Santa Fe Trail to California.*

JOSIAH ROYCE: *California from the Conquest in 1846 . . .*

FRANK MARRYAT: *Mountains and Molehills.*

JACOB DAVID BABCOCK STILLMAN: *Seeking the Golden Fleece.*

VICENTE PÉREZ ROSALES: *California Adventure.*

JOSEPH HENRY JACKSON: *Anybody's Gold.*

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Mrs. Helen S. Giffen: Secretary, Society of California Pioneers.

FRIEDERICH GERSTAECKER: *California Gold Mines.*

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps.*

LEONARD KIP: *California Sketches.*

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado.*

J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF: *Gold Rush: The Journals, Drawings, and Other Papers.*

CARL I. WHEAT: *Maps of the California Gold Region, 1848-1857.*

SOULÉ, GIHON, and NISBET: *The Annals of San Francisco.*

J. ROSS BROWNE: *Crusoe's Island.*

LEROY HAFEN: *Overland Mail, 1849-1869.*

GEORGE T. MARYE, JR.: *From '49 to '83 in California and Nevada.*

Carroll D. Hall: Curator, Sutter's Fort Museum.

HUBERT H. BANCROFT: *History of California.*

ROBERT GLASS CLELAND: *History of California, the American Period.*

WILLIAM HEATH DAVIS: *Seventy-five Years in California.*

JOSIAH ROYCE: *California from the Conquest in 1846 . . .*

JOHN A. SUTTER: *New Helvetia Diary.*

MARY FLOYD WILLIAMS: *Papers of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851.*

JAMES PETER ZOLLINGER: *Sutter, the Man and His Empire.*

RENSCH and HOOVER: *Historic Spots in California. Valley and Sierra Counties.*

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters.*

JOHN BIDWELL: *Echoes of the Past in California.*

George P. Hammond: Director, The Bancroft Library.

J. D. BORTHWICK: *Three Years in California.*

J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF: *Gold Rush: The Journals, Drawings, and Other Papers.*

J. H. CARSON: *Early Recollections of the Mines . . .*

HINTON R. HELPER: *The Land of Gold; Reality vs. Fiction.*

WILLIAM KELLY: *An Excursion to California . . .*

WILLIAM REDMOND RYAN: *Personal Adventures in Upper and Lower California in 1848-49.*

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters.*

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps.*

JOHN A. SUTTER: *New Helvetia Diary.*

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado.*

Phil Townsend Hanna: Editor, *Westways.*

EDWIN BRYANT: *What I Saw in California.*

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BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado*.

HUBERT H. BANCROFT: *California Inter Pocula*.

HUBERT H. BANCROFT: *Popular Tribunals*.

JOSIAH ROYCE: *California from the Conquest in 1846 . . .*

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps*.

RODMAN W. PAUL: *California Gold: The Beginning of Mining in the Far West*.

J. D. BORTHWICK: *Three Years in California*.

JOSEPH WARREN REVERE: *A Tour of Duty in California*.

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters*.

George L. Harding: Historian and Collector.

[House of Rep., 31st Congress, 1st Session. Ex. Doc. No. 17]: *California and New Mexico*.

ALONZO DELANO: *Old Block's Sketch-Book*.

JOSEPH WARREN REVERE: *A Tour of Duty in California*.

JOSIAH ROYCE: *California from the Conquest in 1846 . . .*

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps*.

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters*.

SOULÉ, GIHON, and NISBET: *The Annals of San Francisco*.

SAMUEL C. UPHAM: *Notes on a Voyage to California . . .*

FELIX PAUL WIERZBICKI: *California as it Is . . .*

EDWARD CLEVELAND KEMBLE: *A History of California Newspapers*.

Joseph Henry Jackson: Literary Editor, *San Francisco Chronicle*.

J. D. BORTHWICK: *Three Years in California*.

J. H. CARSON: *Early Recollections of the Mines*.

SAMUEL C. UPHAM: *Notes of a Voyage to California*.

J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF: *Gold Rush: The Journals, Drawings, and Other Papers*.

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado*.

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps*.

ALONZO DELANO: *Life on the Plains and Among the Diggings*.

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters*.

RODMAN W. PAUL: *California Gold: The Beginning of Mining in the Far West*.

Rodman W. Paul: California Institute of Technology.

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado*.

ALONZO DELANO: *Life on the Plains and Among the Diggings*.

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters*.

J. D. BORTHWICK: *Three Years in California*.

SOULÉ, GIHON, and NISBET: *The Annals of San Francisco*.

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HUBERT H. BANCROFT: *Works*.

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps*.

JOSIAH ROYCE: *California from the Conquest in 1846 . . .*

JOHN S. HITTELL: *Mining in the Pacific States of North America*.

FRANKLIN WALKER: *San Francisco's Literary Frontier*.

Mrs. Edna Martin Parratt: Managing Director, California Historical Society.

J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF: *Gold Rush: The Journals, Drawings, and Other Papers*.

AUBREY NEASHAM: *California Gold Discovery: Centennial Papers . . .*

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters*.

ROBERT E. COWAN: *Bibliography of the History of California, 1510-1930*.

ALONZO DELANO: *Old Block's Sketch-Book*.

C. W. HASKINS: *The Argonauts of California*.

WILLIAM LEWIS MANLY: *Death Valley in '49*.

JOSEPH WARREN REVERE: *A Tour of Duty in California*.

CARL I. WHEAT: *Maps of the California Gold Region, 1848-1857*.

MARY FLOYD WILLIAMS: *Papers of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851*.

Thomas W. Streeter: Collector.

LORENZO D. ALDRICH: *Journal of the Overland Route to California*.

JOHN LINVILLE HALL: *Journal of the Hartford Union Mining and Trading Company*.

J. H. CARSON: *Early Recollections of the Mines*.

JOHN R. RIDGE: *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta*.

JOHN BIGLER: *Governor's Special Message [concerning Chinese immigration] to the Senate and Assembly . . .*

[JAMES WILSON]: *A Pamphlet Relating to the Claim of Señor Don José Y. Limantour*.

EDWARD MCGOWAN: *Narrative*.

J. R. POYNTER: *Entewa, the Mountain Bird: A Romance of California*.

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado*.

HORACE BELL: *Reminiscences of a Ranger*.

Henry R. Wagner: Historian and Collector.

FELIX PAUL WIERZBICKI: *California as it Is . . .*

J. H. CARSON: *Early Recollections of the Mines . . .*

HEINRICH LIENHARD: *Journal*.

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters*.

DANIEL B. WOODS: *Sixteen Months at the Gold Diggings*.

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JAMES S. BROWN: *California Gold, an Authentic History . . .*

JOHN STEELE: *In Camp and Cabin.*

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado.*

JOHN A. SUTTER: *New Helvetia Diary.*

LAWSON PATTERSON: *Twelve Years in the Mines of California.*

Miss Caroline Wenzel: California State Library.

EDWIN BRYANT: *What I Saw in California.*

EDWARD GOULD BUFFUM: *Six Months in the Gold Mines.*

[ANON.]: *California, its Past History, its Present Position, its Future Prospects . . .*

WALTER COLTON: *Three Years in California.*

JAMES DELAVAN: *Notes on California and the Placers . . .*

GEORGE G. FOSTER [Ed.]: *The Gold Regions of California.*

JOSEPH WARREN REVERE: *A Tour of Duty in California.*

FAYETTE ROBINSON: *California and its Gold Region.*

WILLIAM REDMOND RYAN: *Personal Adventures in Upper and Lower California in 1848-49.*

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado.*

Carl I. Wheat: Historian and Collector.

J. D. BORTHWICK: *Three Years in California.*

EDWARD GOULD BUFFUM: *Six Months in the Gold Mines.*

WALTER COLTON: *Three Years in California.*

WILLIAM DOWNIE: *Hunting for Gold.*

[J. M. LETTS]: *California Illustrated.*

FRANK MARRYAT: *Mountains and Molehills.*

JOSIAH ROYCE: *California from the Conquest in 1846 . . .*

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN: *Mining Camps.*

BAYARD TAYLOR: *El Dorado.*

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP CLAPPE: *The Shirley Letters.*

BOOKSELLING IN SANTA BARBARA

By Roger Boutell

WHENEVER I try to write anything, my wife says the result sounds to her like a combination of Rasselas and Henry James during one of his more involved moments, and this opinion delivered by one, who from many years association, certainly should be a competent judge, makes

Roger Boutell is owner of the Tecolote Bookshop.

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me wonder whether The Book Club of California editors after reading this will not be tempted to question the wisdom of their decision to ask me to contribute something about bookselling experiences to the *News-Letter*. As I re-read the above sentence, I see, alas, how truly right she is! However, here goes.

My personal acquaintance with Santa Barbara only goes back twenty-six years, so that anything I might say relating to an earlier period would be merely hearsay and inadmissible as evidence, and so it is ruled out.

My own shop carried a stock divided in number of titles more or less equally between current books, and books of interest to collectors—or at least what I hoped might interest collectors. I never possessed any great rarities, but from time to time did have some fairly scarce items. Perhaps the most interesting one relating to California was a copy of the Journal of the Hartford Union Mining and Trading Company; this copy containing four original pencil drawings by the ship's carpenter tipped in, also the printed program of the Fourth of July celebration held on board the ship during the voyage to California, and finally a list in handwriting on the endpapers of the names of all the persons on board. The Grabhorn brothers made a delightful book of the Journal, which was issued in 1928 by The Book Club of California as *Around the Horn in '49*.

A first issue of Dana's *Two Years Before The Mast* in excellent condition was another interesting item. *Two Years Before The Mast* in its attractive current Houghton, Mifflin edition always sold steadily to tourists, especially because one of the rooms occupied by the shop is the former parlor of the old De la Guerra house, and Dana mentions the wedding celebration held here during one of the visits of his ship to Santa Barbara. The legend has grown up here that Dana was a guest of the De la Guerra family at this wedding and its attendant festivities, but I cannot read anything into the account in his book which justifies this belief. In fact, Mr. Richard Henry Dana III, the son of the author, when he visited here some twenty years ago, was amused by this legend and its apocryphal embellishments, and told me that his father had told him that he and some of the other sailors merely watched through a window the celebration indoors.

As far as current books were concerned, selling a lot of "best sellers" gave me no satisfaction, and there were very few of them that I ever felt obliged to read, as they always seemed to sell themselves quite

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nicely. I did try, more or less in vain I am afraid, to overcome the tendency of a number of book buyers to judge books as they would biscuits, by how long they had been out of the oven, rather than by their intrinsic merit.

What always seemed most rewarding was bringing to the attention of discriminating customers books which I thought deserved more attention than they had yet received. Esmé Wingfield Stratford's *History of British Civilization*, a magnificent work, was one of these, and among biographies that little masterpiece *The Tribulations of a Baronet* by Timothy Eden. We sold both these books steadily over a long period. I have often wondered if any others did the same.

The shop never carried anything but books, a few prints, and autograph letters. If it couldn't survive without greeting cards, fancy book-ends, note paper, cameras, fountain pens, etc. etc., well, that was its own hard luck. Anyway, it always did pull through, even through the rather grim thirties, and now under my son's and his wife's ownership, it seems to be doing very nicely indeed. I suppose new blood was needed.

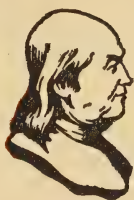
The Wells Fargo History Room

located in the Bank's building at 30 Montgomery Street, contains relics of pony-express and covered-wagon days; an original Hangtown stagecoach; early western franks and postmarks, firearms, pictures, and documents. ✓ Open to visitors 10 to 3 daily, 10 to 12 Saturdays.

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**"I,
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
PRINTER"**





IN THE celebration of National Printing Week attention has once more been focused upon that amazingly versatile American, Benjamin Franklin. When near the end of a long life during which he had achieved eminence in a wide range of activities Franklin sat down to write his last will and testament, he began with the words, "I, Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia, Printer." Able as he was to look back upon notable achievements as a diplomat and statesman, as an inventor and scientist, as a businessman and a philosopher, and as an author and a philanthropist, it was as a craftsman of the press that he first of all regarded himself.

Franklin's lifelong interest in printing centered upon the practical, rather than the artistic. It was in the freedom of his product from typographical blunders and in the blackness of his ink that he chiefly prided himself when he recalled what he considered his finest piece of work, Logan's translation of *Cato Major* published in 1744; and it is in the

content of the works he published, rather than in their form (the first medical treatise and the first novel printed in America for example), that his claim for eminence as a printer chiefly rests.

The craft which Franklin learned as a boy and took pride in as an old man affected even his way of thinking and writing about the democratic principles he cherished throughout his life. This is amusingly revealed in the following letter, written in 1784 to his English friend William Strahan, who had also moved from printing into politics but had chosen at the time of the Revolution to serve the British King rather than to support the American Colonies.

“I remember your observing once to me as we sat together in the House of Commons, that no two Journeymen Printers, within your Knowledge, had met with such Success in the World as ourselves. You were then at the head of your Profession, and soon afterwards became a Member of Parliament. I was an Agent for a few Provinces, and now act for them all. But we have risen by different Modes. I, as a Republican Printer, always liked a Form well *plain'd down*; being averse to those *overbearing* Letters that hold their Heads so *high*, as to hinder their Neighbours from appearing. You, as a Monarchist, chose to work upon *Crown* Paper, and found it profitable; while I work'd upon *pro patria* (often indeed call'd *Fools Cap*) with no less advantage. Both our *Heaps* hold out very well, and we seem likely to make a pretty good day's Work of it. With regard to Public Affairs (to continue in the same stile), it seems to me that the Compositors in your Chapel do not *cast off their Copy* well, nor perfectly understand *Imposing*; their *Forms*, too, are continually pester'd by the *Outs* and *Doubles*, that are not easy to be corrected. And I think they were wrong in laying aside some *Faces*, and particularly certain *Head-pieces*, that would have been both useful and ornamental. But, Courage! The Business may still flourish with good Management; and the Master become as rich as any of the Company.”

*This comment was expressly written for the
Quarterly News-Letter by Clarence Faust. De-
signed by A. R. Tommasini and printed by the
University of California Press, March, 1948* ♦

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In the autograph field, the most interesting item I ever had was a long letter Daniel Webster wrote just after he had finished college. In this letter to another young man, Webster waxed very chatty, made a number of sly jokes, and wound up by aligning his various good and bad traits as he recognized them, in a sort of trial balance to evaluate the chances of success or failure during his future life.

Among illustrators Arthur Rackham has always been my outstanding favorite, and there was always a thrill when a really pristine copy of one of his early limiteds arrived from England. At one time the shop possessed an almost complete set of all of Rackham's books in the limited signed editions, including the two scarcest, together with several examples of his very early work in black and white. It really was a very depressing day when a misguided purchaser insisted on taking them all! By the way, there was a delightful sympathetic tribute paid to Rackham and his work by Robert Lawson, himself an outstanding illustrator, in the *Horn Book* a year or two ago.

Santa Barbara has always been a place for visitors and we had many pleasant calls from authors. Offhand I recall J. B. Priestley, Liam O'Flaherty, Richard Blaker, Hugh Walpole, Elinor Mordaunt, Mary Ellen Chase, Dr. Logan Clendening, and last but not least Alexander Woollcott. All of these were delightful and stimulating. But to glance at the reverse of the medal, there was one lady author who was described to me by the representative of her own publisher as "the marshmallow with the steel core." After meeting the lady, I felt the description could not have been more appropriate.

For an author to come to a book shop where he is not known and not only ask how his latest book is selling, and why aren't there many more on display, but all about its merits, is a practice occasionally engaged in, and one which may be fraught with unfortunate consequences, both to the author's happiness and the bookseller's peace of mind, especially if the latter always tries to be truthful and at the same time helpful. Once an unknown gentleman picked up a book and asked what I thought of it. I replied that it seemed to me that it treated its important subject in a rather superficial and journalistic manner, and that so and so's book was much more reliable and trustworthy. Whereupon the unknown put down the book he had been holding, with what seemed rather more emphasis than was necessary, gave me a look which withered me on the spot, and marched out. I idly picked up the book which the visitor had put in the wrong place, and glancing at the back

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of the jacket, was faced by an excellent portrait of the late departed.

Sometimes odd incidents occurred, mostly forgotten now, but some stick. Once a stranger, a very important looking lady of indeterminate age entered, made a purchase and directed that it be charged. When asked for her name and address, she announced the name with an air of haughty surprise at her questioner's ignorance, and added "I am much too important to have an address, just Montecito." Montecito, of course adjoins Santa Barbara and is an area of large beautiful estates which I suppose might make their owners feel important, but never having owned a large beautiful estate I am uncertain as to what the mental reaction would be.

The twenty years I spent selling books were rewarding, and I am sorry I did not start earlier in my life. Few people can hope for great financial rewards from bookselling, but having done various other things, I can think of few vocations more absorbing and at the same time entertaining.

LETTERS OF THE GOLD DISCOVERY

TO COMMEMORATE THE YEAR 1848, The Book Club of California will issue a series of letters for its 1948 Keepsake Series delineating the expanding news of the gold discovery during that eventful year. No other event in the history of the state bore such significance of future portent. The theme is GOLD!

First in the series will be two short letters of John A. Sutter written at New Helvetia on January 15 and 23, respectively. These are new, hitherto unpublished documents, and very interesting. In the first, Sutter is occupied with the events of the day—number of cattle sent from San Francisco, price of flour, buying a "decent cap" for himself, repairing the launch, etc. In the second, written to his agent in San Francisco on the very eve of the gold discovery, Sutter lists various articles that he needs at New Helvetia, but there is no hint of anything unusual; there is no request for shovels or pans or other miners' tools. Miss Caroline Wenzel will provide the commentary for these letters.

The February Keepsake will be the celebrated lease of Sutter and Marshall, as partners, with the chiefs of the Yalesumney tribe, drawn up and signed on February 4, for leasing the Indians' lands for a period of twenty years. While the contents of this document have been known in a general way, it is only now that a copy of the lease has been found

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and can be included in this series, by courtesy of the State Library at Sacramento. Charles Olson, author of *Call me Ishmael*, will write the commentary.

The March Keepsake will reproduce an extremely interesting letter of Captain Sutter to William A. Leidesdorff concerning Sutter's saw-mill and gold activities. The original is preserved in the Huntington Library and reproduced by its permission. The commentary will be by George P. Hammond, Director of The Bancroft Library.

The above papers, with exception of that in the Huntington Library, were recently given to the State Library by Bruce Robinson of San Diego. They are part of a collection of letters and other materials left by George McKinstry, well-known California pioneer. McKinstry had boarded with Robinson's grandparents, and the papers had been left in an old barn on their property. When discovered by Robinson they were musty, rat-bitten, and covered with an accumulation of filth, but recognizing their historical value Robinson had the foresight to donate them to the State Library. It is a great pleasure to present these new documents as the first items in the 1948 Keepsake Series—valuable and appropriate reminders of that other discovery back in 1848!

Suitable Gold Rush documents are being selected for the rest of the year. Tentative plans call for a letter by E. C. Kemble for April 1848, that quiet month which was like a lull before the storm. About the 15th of that month, Kemble visited the mines, though he had pretended only to "ruralize among the rustics of the country for a few weeks." If he saw anything exciting, he did not reveal it in the pages of his newspaper, the *Star*, but in 1885 he wrote an explanation to Hittell, which is full of interest, even though it was a case of hindsight.

For May, the month when most Californians got the "golden-yellow fever" in its worst form and were drawn irresistibly to the mountains, we have the letter of Thomas O. Larkin to Colonel Mason, Governor of California, written from San José on the 25th and telling of the desertion of the towns and farms. It gives an intimate picture of the symptoms of the "disease."

Life was not all golden in California, even in the year 1848. There were some who stayed behind while the more adventurous went to see the goldfields for themselves. Ships began to pile up in San Francisco harbor—newspapers suspended operations—people were born and died. Among the latter was William A. Leidesdorff, a native of the

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Danish West Indies who had become one of the most prominent business men and property holders of San Francisco; a member of the council, treasurer, and active politician. His death raised the question of administration of his estate, a delicate matter, for he had become a Mexican citizen, and when he died the territory was under the flag of the United States. In this period of transition Governor Mason's letters to Consul Larkin and John Townsend, first Alcalde of San Francisco, remind us of these new problems of administration which were to become acute as the Argonauts flooded into California. The June Keepsake will be concerned with this problem.

So much for the first six months. May we draw a curtain over the plans for the rest of the year and keep you in suspense?

PAUL ELDER

PAUL ELDER, bookseller, publisher, and author, died on January 23. He was seventy-six.

Just fifty years ago he opened his bookstore in the old Mills Building in San Francisco and started a career which was to associate his name throughout the world with the finest traditions of bookselling. Soon after he joined forces with Morgan Shepard, who later became famous as "John Martin," and moved to 238 Post Street, directly across the street from the present store. It was charming and quaint, "altogether the most attractive shop in San Francisco." But the great fire of 1906 leveled all this area, and Bernard Maybeck created for him one of the first and loveliest stores on Van Ness when the merchants moved there while the city was rebuilding. It was Old English type, with massive beams, peaked roof and dormer windows. When the trek back downtown started, Paul Elder occupied a five story building on Grant Avenue. The setting was impressively Gothic, again designed by Maybeck. In 1920 he made another move; all present day San Franciscans and many visitors from afar know the famous Post Street store which for the last twenty-eight years has been one of the show places of San Francisco.

As a publisher Paul Elder established the Tomoye Press with which several fine printers were associated, including Taylor & Taylor and the late John Henry Nash. Publications of the press, which were outstanding for their fine typography and beautiful format, included both standard literature and original writings by western authors. Notable

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among these were *The Sea Fogs* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Bohemian San Francisco* (both now collector's items); *Comfort Found in Good Old Books* and other books by George Hamlin Fitch; *The Love Sonnets of a Hoodlum* and the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, Jr.* by Wallace Irwin; *Cynics Calendar of Revised Wisdom* by Oliver Hereford; a series of books about the San Diego and the San Francisco expositions, etc. He withdrew from active publishing in 1915. Mr. Elder was himself the author or editor of numerous books, including *Mosaic Essays*, *California the Beautiful*, and *Old Spanish Missions of California*.

Gertrude Atherton has observed that "his career as a bookseller has been both interesting and original for he combined a sound business faculty with the soul of an artist."

THIRTEEN CALIFORNIA TOWNS

THE LATEST CLUB PUBLICATION, *Thirteen California Towns*, being the first publication of this important series of pencil drawings made in the middle '50s by an unknown artist, was well received by the members,

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all but fifty-eight of the edition of three hundred copies having been subscribed to date. Members are limited to one copy each. Those who have not yet placed orders for this extremely desirable California item (printed by The Grabhorn Press and priced at \$16.50) are urged to do so promptly.

ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

The following have been elected to membership since the Winter issue of the *News-Letter*:

MEMBER		SPONSOR
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Roy Vernon Sowers	Glenwood	Lewis Allen
Bertram Wolff	New York, N. Y.	William H. Freeman

MISCELLANY

OCCASIONALLY MEMBERS have been recipients of gift inserts in their *News-Letter*. In 1947, supplements on *The Grabhorns* and *John Henry Nash* accompanied the Spring and Autumn issues respectively. Both were produced at The Black Vine Press by Harold Seeger and Albert Sperisen. The enclosed insert on Benjamin Franklin is the result of the generous cooperation of Dr. Clarence Faust, Director of Stanford University Libraries, and of Samuel T. Farquhar, Director of the University of California Press. We gratefully acknowledge these excellent textual and typographic contributions.

From the Ward Ritchie Press (1932 Hyperion Avenue, Los Angeles 27) comes the announcement of his latest book—*Europe Under the Old Regime* by Albert Sorel. This is the first translation of the introduction to the great French classic history *L'Europe et la révolution française*, translated by Francis H. Herrick, Professor of Modern European History at Mills College. The price is \$2.50

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Printing Week, commemorating Benjamin Franklin's birthday early in January, was celebrated for the first time in northern California this year. Participating enthusiastically, printing establishments entertained thousands of visitors; bookstores, department stores, banks, and newspapers arranged window displays; libraries and schools exhibited books and ephemera illustrating the development of printing; and periodicals highly publicized the week's events. Through the auspices of the International Association of Printing House Craftsmen and the National Graphic Arts Association, plans are now developing for an especially varied celebration for next year.

What may well prove to be an important legal point in the purchase of unpublished manuscript material has recently been aired in the New York Supreme Court. A manuscript of Samuel Clemens written in 1876 and titled *A Murder, A Mystery and A Marriage* was purchased at auction at the Parke-Bernet Galleries in 1945. The purchaser, after printing sixteen copies for copyright purposes, was sued by the estate of Mark Twain to stop publication. The suit was dismissed on the grounds that the trustees failed to prove that the publishing rights had not been acquired with the purchase of the material. The book is planned to be issued in a limited edition as a collector's item.

Updike: American Printer and His Merrymount Press—This, in effect, is a memorial edition to honor one of America's truly fine scholar-printers. (It is the first of a series on the Graphic Arts and the Arts of the Book to be published by the American Institute of Graphic Arts.)

This book is a collection of essays on Updike and his work by eight different authorities—the ninth is autobiographical—"Notes on the Press and Its Work with a Bibliographical List of Books Printed at the Press." There is appended a "Gallery of Merrymount Title-Pages and Merrymount Types," being an edited review of the many styles and designs that made Updike famous. These are printed in two colors.

All of the essays but two have previously appeared in book form. The two original contributions are "Recollections and Perspectives" by Stanley Morison, editor of the *Literary Supplement* of the *London Times* and better known to us as an eminent authority on typography and on the makers of books—and "An Enquiry into Updike and the Name Merrymount" by Carl Purington Rollins, master university printer, lecturer and authority on printing.

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All of the essays are remembrances of, or appreciations of, or evaluations of Updike as man and printer-scholar. Morison is delightfully intimate and Rollins enlivens his essay with a whimsey on the derivation of the name Merrymount.

We believe this is a book all should own and it is well worth the price—but we are a trifle dismayed by the numerous typographical errors. (It is difficult to spell “Guatemala” and “Narragansett” but it is hard to understand how a proofreader could miss “guote” for “quote.”) And the presswork is poor. All of this is completely out of character with the man who is being remembered.

American Institute of Graphic Arts, New York. \$3.50.

The Rosenbach Company in their *Rare Books, Manuscripts and Autograph Letters*, list some breath-taking “five figure” books. In what they describe as “the only complete copy in private hands of one of the greatest Caxtons”—*The Boke of the Fayt of Armies and of Chyualrye* they ask a mere \$24,750. But probably the most interesting item is the twenty-two autographed love letters of Benjamin Franklin to

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Madame Brillon de Jouy (March 10, 1778 to April 19, 1788) at just \$2.50 less than the Caxton.

Charles S. Bosen (270 Park Avenue, New York 17) has issued three catalogues from the library of the late Dr. Samuel Wyllis Bandler, in three parts. Part one, *English Literature XVI-XX Century, First Editions, Manuscripts and Autograph Letters*, costs \$1.00. Part two, *American and English Literature—First Editions, Manuscripts and Autograph Letters* costs \$.50; and Part three is *Illustrated Books, Press Books, Original Watercolors*, costs \$1.00. The Doctor's collection is not a great one—there are no complete runs of any of the authors. For the most part, the collection represents the "high spots" of the periods. However, there is a remarkable run of original Rowlandson drawings, modestly priced. Mr. Bosen has generously agreed to send free copies of these catalogues, as long as they last, to any member mentioning this review.

Amateur bookbinders in the San Francisco Bay area will have several examples of their work displayed March 8 through the 13th at the T. & J. Lawrence Book Store, 123 West Portal Avenue. The consecutive steps through which a book progresses when being hand-bound will also be exhibited. Plans call for active demonstrations of sewing, paring of leather and other operations in extra binding.

Among those amateurs whose work will be shown are: Lewis and Dorothy Allen, William Beatty, Robert Bruckman, Mrs. A. B. C. Dohrmann, Ralph Enger, Jane Grabhorn, Haakon Jenssen, Juliet and Trubby Lawrence, Duncan Olmsted, Leah Wollenberg, and B. E. Watters.

Any member interested in having his or her name included in the first postwar revision of *Private Book Collectors* published by R. R. Bowker Co., 62 West 45th Street, New York 19, write A. C. Frasia of Bowker for proper form.

The Book Arts Club of the University of California has just published a small book of printers' marks compiled and edited by Edwin E. Willoughby, chief bibliographer of the Folger Shakespeare Library. The title is *Fifty Printers' Marks*, a selected list of the more rare marks together with an interesting and brief description of the lives and works

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of these printers. This is a most desirable item, very well executed and attractively priced. The book is limited to 400 copies and can be had for \$3.50.

A review of current book catalogues: The Chiswick Book Shop (2 East 46th Street, New York 17) has issued a catalogue of interest to Grabhorn collectors. It is really, a "Grabhorn item," reproducing two title pages and two printers' marks, and listing 62 Grabhorn books.

For one month, beginning about March 10, there will be an exhibition of the graphic works of the late Hugo Steiner-Prag at the California School of Fine Arts. This exhibition is being sponsored by the San Francisco Society of Graphic Arts, and is of particular interest to book people. Steiner-Prag had designed over 2000 fine books during his life. The exhibit not only will show his excellent book work but designs for book plates, book jackets, broadsides and marks. Coincident with this exhibit, the De Young Museum will show an exhibit of Steiner-Prag's paintings.

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Probably the finest catalogue issued since the war (from a printer's standpoint) has just been received from William H. Robinson Ltd. (16 & 17 Pall Mall, London). The book is bound in white paper boards, large quarto, 190 pages and magnificently illustrated. The title is *Catalogue of Extremely Rare and Important Printed Books and Ancient Manuscripts*—Catalogue 77. The selection of books and manuscripts describes and illustrates representative items from the first book printed in the English language (*Recuyell of the Historyes of Troy*, printed by Caxton in 1475 and here listed at \$60,000), to the second book printed in Australia in 1805. In the manuscript field, two folio leaves of Anglo Saxon writing in the Eighth Century to some important historical writings on the Eighteenth Century. And typical of English bookdealers understatements, the term "highly important" is here associated with items *unknown to bibliographers*, some *only known copies* and others, *never before offered in booksellers catalogues*.

In the House of Books Ltd. (2 West 56th Street, New York 17) we note with interest the Book Club's keepsake *The Foghorn* by Gertrude Atherton (Number 4 of the "Contemporary California Short Stories," 1937, and printed by the Grabhorns) selling for \$6.50! Of course, this copy is autographed by G.A.

And speaking of former Book Club books, we can't help feeling smug about the Caxton that we issued in 1938 and printed by the Grabhorns being currently offered by Bernard Quaritch of London for £37. 10s. —or to you, \$150.00! (Members bought it for \$15.00.)

Catalogue Number 222 of the Dawson's Book Shop (627 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles) lists a fine run of documents and important books on Mexico and California.

From the Zamorano Club of Los Angeles came a neatly printed booklet on Thomas Perry Stricker (1899-1944) with biographical notes by H. Richard Archer. For the most part this is a pickup from part four of the *Selective Check Lists of Press Books* as issued by Philip Duschnes with the addition of nine more items to the bibliography and the Appreciation by Mr. Archer. It is charmingly printed for Mr. Archer by Fred Anthoensen as a keepsake for the Zamorano Club.

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Again, the Argonaut Book Shop (336 Kearny Street, San Francisco 8) lists an amazing run of Grabhorn's and Book Club Keepsakes, in their recent catalogue number 7. And, to tempt further the palate of the collector, a "White Elephant" sale.

At a recent auction of the late Colonel John Bancker Gribbel books by the Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York, \$4,200 was paid for a Kelmscott Chaucer, one of thirteen copies on vellum and the only copy inscribed by William Morris. Colonel Gribbel was for many years a member of the Club.

Paul Elder's noted San Francisco bookstore is moving, after twenty-eight years at 239 Post Street. Many of the unusual features of the Post Street building will be incorporated in the new store which will open soon at the southwest corner of Stockton and Sutter streets. The spacious ground floor just off the street will accommodate the bulk of the extensive stock of books from all departments and all fields of literature, and will be supplemented by special sections on the elevator-service balcony. Also on the balcony will be greeting cards, social stationery, prints and picture-framing. The store is under the management of Paul Elder, Jr., and his wife Eloise.

Books Inc. (Barbara Beach Thompson and Lewis F. Lengfeld), of the Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco, have acquired a new and larger downtown headquarters through purchase of control of the well-known bookselling firm of Gelber, Lilienthal, Inc., at 336 Sutter Street. The entire store has been remodeled: the large rear room will shelve out-of-print and rare books, and Books Inc.'s well-known 10¢ to \$1.00 "Bargain Basement"; the commodious front room will house current books and stationery. The Rare Book Room was reopened recently with a display of early Californiana and western material for which a catalogue is available for distribution.

The Harvard Library Department of Graphic Arts has announced the publication of *Durer's 1511 Drawing of a Press and Printer*, being an illustrated monograph by Professor Ray Nash of Dartmouth College. The size is 9" x 12", 12 pps., printed in black and red, bound in gold-stamped black cloth; the price, \$2.50. Mail check to Department of Graphic Arts, Harvard College, Cambridge 38, Mass.